COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

VOL. XVI. No. 23.] LONDON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1809. [Price 1s.

" When a large country is not fortified in the swords, and in the hearts of its People, it cannot be " defended."——MAJOR CARTWRIGHT. Ægis, Vol. I. p. 114.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

DANGER TO IRELAND *(continued* from p. 841).——In the article here referred to, I entered upon the subject of the danger, from an invasion, to which this kingdom must soon be exposed, upon the supposition that the Emperor Napoleon made himself master of the Southern Peninsula; and, I endeavoured to point out the causes of particular danger to Ireland.——Let me beg the reader's leave to recapitulate the substance of what was then said. It was this: That, it was in the very nature of things that Napoleon should possess an increased desire of conquering this kingdom;—— that it was manifest that he would possess infinitely greater means of conquering it than he possessed in 1803, when we thought it necessary to make preparations for fortifying London;—— that it is possible, at least, for him, in the course of a year, to send forth a powerful armament from nine or ten different ports at the same time;—— that this is not to be prevented by any system of blockade;—— that, the chances are many to one, that some one or more of such armaments, each consisting, perhaps, of from twenty to forty thousand men, would reach Ireland in safety, if such were their destination;——that, if Ireland were subdued, the consequences to England must be terrible;——that, therefore, it became us seriously to consider, *how, in such a crisis, the people of Ireland would be likely to act.*——I did not enter into this last question, and proposed, without entering into it, to show, in this present sheet, how the people of Ireland might, in one respect, at least, be *conciliated*, alluding to the measure against which the abominable cry of " *No-Popery* " was raised. But, upon re-considering the matter, I think it best, before I come to this latter topic, to give the English reader a view of the actual situation of the people of Ireland, I mean their situation so far as relates to what may be supposed to have an influence upon their conduct in case of invasion by the French.——It is a great misfortune to this kingdom in general, that Ireland is separated from England by water; because, besides many other evils, it is productive of this, that the people of England are not only, generally speaking, ignorant of what is passing in Ireland, but they, at best, seem to *care* but little about the matter, too many of them looking upon the Irish as scarcely being countrymen, not a few considering them as an inferior race of beings, and almost the whole regarding the interests of Ireland and those of England as being perfectly distinct. There are, indeed, but few amongst us, who do not perceive; who have not great misgivings, that, if Napoleon were master of Ireland, England would be in danger, and, indeed, that England must, in all human probability, soon experience the fate of Ireland. Yet, strange to say! the feeling excited by this reflection is, in but too many instances, that of *anger* against the people of Ireland.——Nothing can be more *unjust* than this way of thinking; but, still, the *folly* of it surpasses its injustice. *Angry* with the Irish, because . . . . . because what? Why, because their existence endangers our safety! Angry with them because they are alive, and have a desire to enjoy life! Sad dogs those Irishmen must be to desire to keep alive, when to keep alive may be dangerous to us!——Be our notions, however, what they may; to whatever lengths our vanity, self-conceit, folly, or injustice, may lead us, we shall, at last, find, that, if Napoleon should land a considerable army in Ireland, it will depend *solely* upon the disposition of the *people* of Ireland, whether that army shall succeed in its object there, and *here* also; for, it is not to be credited, that even the most stupid of the No-Popery clan, can entertain the slightest hope of England's escaping subjugation, should Ireland once fall into the hands of the enemy.——It is, therefore, of the greatest importance, that we *now* form correct notions as to what the *disposition of the people of Ireland is, in case of invasion by the French, likely to be;* and, in order thereunto, let us now see what is the situation of the people of Ireland; let us see, whether that situation be such as to *fortify their*

hearts in defence of their country; let us see, whether they are in the possession and enjoyment of blessings, flowing from government, rather than risk the loss of which men will naturally venture their lives.—— The political state, the state of the *persons*, of the people of Ireland is as follows.—— There is a law, passed just after the present ministry came into power, in 1807, which law enables the Lord Lieutenant, upon receiving a memorial of the *magistrates* of any county, stating that *disturbances* exist therein, to *proclaim that county to be in a disturbed state.* Proclaiming a county to be in a disturbed state does not seem, at first sight, to be a very harsh measure. But, stop a bit, and you shall see what are the consequences of such proclamation.——The moment this proclamation has taken place, the law compels every man, woman, and child in that county, to remain *within their houses* from *sun-set* to *sun-rise;* shut up, absolutely enclosed within walls, cut off from all communication with neighbours, friends, relations (sick or well) for one half of every twenty-four hours. It is well known, that a considerable portion of agricultural labour ought to be performed between sun-set and sun-rise. But, why need I descant upon the vexations of such a state? The reader, be his rank of life what it may, has only to *make the case his own;* has only to consider *himself* in the place of one of the people of Ireland; and he will want no detail of the hardships which must accompany such a state of life.—— Well, but being shut up in this manner is a mere trifle; it is not worthy of mention; it sinks completely out of sight, when compared with other parts of the law in question.——The *magistrates*, that is to say, persons appointed by the government, are first to call upon the Lord Lieutenant to proclaim a county, and, when that is done, these same magistrates have the authority, either by *themselves* or their *officers*, to make *forcible* entry, *at any time in the night*, into any house, to *see whether its inhabitants be at home*, and to take up and imprison all those who may be caught out of their houses.——When this bill was before the House of Commons, it was proposed, by Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Brand, Sir John Newport, and others, to qualify the clause giving this terrible power, so as to give the poor alarmed wretches within, *ten minutes* to prepare for the visit; because, even decency required, that women should have time to rise and dress themselves. This proposition was, however, *rejected*, and the words "*reasonable time*" inserted instead of *ten minutes;* leaving, as the reader will perceive, the magistrates or their officers, to *be the judges* of what time was *reasonable.*——Reader, what do you think of this sort of life? How should you (no matter where you live) like to be shut up in your house from sun-set to sun-rise, every twenty-four hours of your life, and, while so shut up, be liable to have your house entered by *force*, at any hour of the night, by your neighbouring magistrates, or their officers? How should you like it? How should *you* like it, I say? Pray, do, not answer me by talking about the *necessity* of such laws: that we will talk of by-and-by. What I want to know of you, at present, is, how you should like to live this sort of life. How you think you should feel disposed, in such a situation? Whether you would hazard much rather than lose the enjoyments of such a state? ——But, you have, as yet, but half a sight of the law, under which the Irish live. You must, to be a judge of the state, and of the *feelings*, of the Irish, see the part of the bill in question, which sets aside the common-law, *as to redress against the magistrates and others*, in cases where they may, under colour of this act, be guilty of *unlawful violences against the people.* Magistrates and others are, according to the law of the land, liable to be sued and to be punished for an abuse of their power and authority; and very necessary it is that they should be so liable, because, if they were not, there would be no end to their oppressions. The king, or rather his *ministers*, appoint the magistrates; but, then, the people, if these magistrates abuse their power, can bring their conduct before a *jury.* This is our protection; this is what we have to *rely* on; this is the source of our security against magisterial insolence and oppression. Any man of us can bring an unjust magistrate before a jury to answer for any injury, of any sort, that he may have done us.——But, how are the Irish situated in this respect? What protection have *they*, under the law before us, against any abuse of power committed by the magistrates and others? "Why," the reader will say, "they can "surely bring their action against such "magistrates?" Oh, yes! They can bring their action; the bar would fain lose none of its profits; but, what is to take place in *case of a verdict for the plaintiff?* Ah! reader, you never would guess it, if you

were to guess for a thousand years. Lest you should not believe my account of it, you shall have it in the words of the act itself:——"Provided always, and be it "further enacted, That when *a verdict* "*shall be given for the plaintiff* in any action "to be brought against any justice of the "peace, peace officer, or other person, for "taking or imprisoning or detaining any "person, or for seizing arms, or entering "houses under colour of any authority "given by this act, and it shall *appear to* "THE JUDGE OR JUDGES before "whom the same shall be tried, that there "was a PROBABLE CAUSE for doing the "act complained of in such action, and the "judge or court shall certify the same on "record, then and in that case the plaintiff "shall not be entitled to more than *sixpence* "damages, *nor to any costs of suit:* provided "also, that where a verdict shall be given "for the plaintiff in any such action as "aforesaid and the *judge or court* before "whom the cause shall be tried, shall "certify on the record that the injury for "which such action is brought was wil-"fully and maliciously committed, the "plaintiff shall be entitled to treble costs "of suit."——Thus, then, though a man, injured by the magistrates, or their officers, should obtain a verdict; should have the decision of *a jury* in his favour, the *judge* may, at his pleasure, nullify that decision, and the injured person, by way of *redress*, may have *to pay his own costs!* ——I ask you, *English* reader, how *you* should like that? How *you* should relish such laws? How *you* should feel disposed, if you were living under such laws? To what extent *you* would go in the way of hazarding your life, rather than lose the enjoyments belonging to a state of life like this? I put these questions to you, and beg you to put them home to your bosom; for, be assured, that, if the Southern Peninsula falls completely under the sway of Napoleon, you will soon find, that these questions are of vital importance to you. You may be *angry* with the Irish, because they are alive, because they may be a source of danger to you; yes, you may *curse* the Irish; but, that will do you no good, if Buonaparté should succeed in landing forty or fifty thousand men in Ireland, and should (which God forbid!) find a very considerable part of the people ready to join him, instead of being ready to shed their blood in opposing him.——Of the clause, which I have just quoted, SIR ARTHUR PIGOT, the late Attorney General, said, "that first, "this most extraordinary bill gave extra-"ordinary powers to magistrates, and "then, after they had exceeded the powers "given them, they were, by this same bill, "to be protected against the verdict of a "jury. It is," added he, "*a mockery to* "*continue the Trial by Jury*, and yet to de-"prive an injured person of the effect of "a verdict after it had been given in his "favour."——One of the arguments, used in defence of this clause, was, that the *Judges* of Ireland were *impartial* and *upright*. Of the *fact* here stated I choose to say nothing; but, the argument, if good for any thing at all in this case, would be, at least, equally good as applied to *England*, where the Judges are not certainly *less* impartial and upright than they are in Ireland. Yet, English reader, are *you* prepared to resign the Trial by Jury? Are *you* prepared to be content to leave it to the Judge to say, whether you shall, or shall not, have the benefit of a verdict in your favour, when you complain of injuries sustained from magistrates and others, acting under the pretence of law? Would *you* be content to live in such a state? Would *you* risk your life, rather than lose the enjoyments of such a state? Answer me not, I beseech you, by urging the *necessity* of the law. That is a matter yet to be discussed, and then we shall inquire *whence* the dire necessity has arisen. But, I am now merely describing the state, the *actual state* of the people of Ireland, in order that we may form a correct judgment as to what would be likely to be their line of conduct in case of an invasion of their country by a French army. And I ask you how you think *you* should feel, if you were living in such a state?——Upon the clause, intended to protect the magistrates against the verdict of Juries, SIR JOHN NEWPORT related two instances of the conduct of the persons in authority in Ireland, which will bring the scene a little closer before our eyes. "The one," he said, "was that "of a merchant who was taken up *on* "*suspicion*, 100,000*l*. *bail was offered* for "his appearance at the necessary time; "*this was refused*, the man's business was "ruined for want of his own presence to "conduct it, and he became a bankrupt. "He afterwards went out to America; he "carried with him the disease of the mind "which had thus been occasioned, be-"came melancholy, his senses were de-"ranged, and he made an attempt upon "his life. Another person was appre-

" hended in the county of Tipperary, be-
" cause he was guilty of having *a piece of*
" *French manuscript in his pocket*, and by
" order of the Sheriff he WAS FLOG-
" GED, because the Sheriff in his extreme
" *loyal zeal* concluded that the manuscript
" must be seditious, or it would not have
" been written in French, *a language which*
" *he did not understand*. He therefore in-
" treated gentlemen to look a little at the
" other side; to feel a little for the injured
" individual as well as for the erring ma-
" gistrates."——These are SIR JOHN NEWPORT's own words, uttered in the House of Commons. The two sufferers he declared to be "*worthy individuals.*"——Now, then, English reader, I will not ask you how you would like this, for there is no man who can like to be *flogged;* but, I will ask you, how you would like to be *liable* to it? I will ask you how you think *you* should feel disposed, if, upon complaining of treatment of this sort, a jury were to give a verdict in your favour, and the judge were to nullify that verdict, it appearing to *him* that there was "*probable cause*" for flogging you?——No, no; I retract: I do not ask you this question. I will not insult you by asking you *how you should feel* upon an occasion, the very idea of which now makes my own blood boil in my veins.—— It is odd: it will scarcely be believed that the coincidence is not feigned; but it is really so, that *at the very moment* when I was finishing the last sentence (Wednesday, 12 o'clock), a letter from London informed me of the result of the Trial, in the action of MR. CLIFFORD against BRANDON for false-imprisonment; and informed me also of the *singular circumstances* (which will, I trust, be published at full length) of that Trial.——Now, English reader, how do you think that Irishmen, upon hearing these circumstances related, must feel? Will not the result of this trial, considering its peculiar circumstances, revive in their minds "thoughts that "burn?" How should *you* feel, if you were in their situation?——Such, then, is the state of Ireland. It is useless to dwell longer upon this part of the subject. Having described *the law*, under which the people of Ireland live, the English reader will want nothing more to enable him to judge of the nature of their situation; and, then, he has next to consider, how the people of Ireland, while in such a state, are likely to act, in the case of an invasion of their country, on the part of the French. ——It was, when this law was passed, asserted, in the House of Commons, that there was a *French party* in Ireland. If that was really the case, there can be no doubt (if the said party be still in existence) how a part, at least, of the people of Ireland would act. But, the question I wish to put to my readers is this: whether they think that the people of Ireland, in general, *will*, or *will not*, feel disposed to fly to arms, and *to risk their lives, in defence of that state of things, in which they now live?*——To those, who answer in the affirmative; to those who think it likely, that the people of Ireland would venture their lives in defence of what I have been describing, lest *worse* should fall upon them; to those, who think thus, I have nothing further to say, except, indeed, this, that the law, of which I have been speaking, must be *unnecessary*, seeing that even it is not regarded as sufficient to induce the people to join the army of an invader. But, to those, if there be any such, who fear, that all is not *quite sound* in Ireland; to those who fear, that there are, notwithstanding the smooth surface of the political sea, all the materials of a storm in existence, and that those materials are daily and hourly increasing in quantity and in their destroying powers; to those who fear, that, if an invasion by the French were to take place, such invasion would, as things now stand, meet but with a faint resistance, at best, from the great body of the people, who, be it observed, are, by law, liable to have their arms taken from them by the magistrates; to those, who may fear, in short, that Ireland is not "fortified in the swords, and in the "hearts, of her people;" to such persons, if any such there be, I have some observations to offer, FIRST, as to the constantly pleaded *necessity* of the rigorous laws, of which I have been speaking; and SECONDLY, as to the means of removing such necessity, supposing it to exist, and thereby of fortifying Ireland in the swords, and in the hearts, of her people.——*Whence*, then, has this dire necessity arisen? The present set of ministers and their predecessors of the Pitt school have had the management of the nation's affairs for the last nearly thirty years. They have, except for about fifteen months, never experienced any interruption. They have done with the whole of our means what seemed good to them; and, therefore, upon all sound maxims of politics, we have a right to look *to them* for the cause of this at once shameful and dangerous necessity. It is

sometimes pretended, that the law, of which I have been speaking, is levelled solely at certain desperate individuals; and, that the great body of the people of Ireland are perfectly loyal and well-disposed; but, that this is not sincerely said is but too manifest from the provision relative to *the verdict of juries;* for, the *odiousness* of that clause was confessed by Mr. Perceval himself, though he still contended for its necessity. And, such was the opinion entertained of *juries*, that it was flatly stated, that "*if this clause was "omitted, the whole of the bill might as well "be thrown out.*" Now, it must be clear to every one, that, if this was the case, the opinion must have been, that a very large portion of persons in the middling ranks of life was infected with dangerous principles and designs. Indeed, nothing short of such a persuasion could have induced any minister to think of such a measure, which measure must, of itself, operate as a most powerful encouragement to any enemy, entertaining intentions, or wishes, to invade the country. What must necessarily have been the opinion of Napoleon, as to the state of Ireland, as to the disposition of the people of Ireland, when he read the law, of which we have been speaking, and the parliamentary debates connected with that law? Indeed, he has taken care not to keep his opinion, upon this subject, a secret; for, in answer to Mr. Canning's paper about Spain, he most significantly observes, That we have no more to do with his measures with regard to the people of Spain, than he has to do with *our measures with regard to the people of Ireland.* He did not lose, I'll warrant him, one word of what was said in parliament about the *French Party* in Ireland; and, he is too wise not to know, that his astonishing victories, and the other events that have occurred within the last two years, are not of a sort to work a diminution, either in the numbers or the hopes of such party.——What, then, is to be done? Do we hope, that Ireland can be kept in this state *until peace is made?* What folly! Just as if the enemy, in making peace with us, would not take into account this very situation of Ireland. Just as if, in all his calculations respecting our means, he did not look upon Ireland as a burden, rather than as a source of strength. Just as if, in short, he did not look upon Ireland as one of his best allies. He might find himself deceived; but that this is his opinion is very clear; and, it is not less clear, that, while Ireland remains in its present state, there can be no hopes of any peace with Napoleon, that shall not be fuller of danger than a continuance of the war.——We may, as I before observed, be *angry* with the Irish *because about five millions of them continue to be alive;* we may hate them and curse them; we may wish their island sunk to the bottom of the sea; but, still they live, and live they will. We cannot annihilate them; we cannot get them out of the way of the French; no, nor can we, by all the means that we are masters of, prevent them, in case of an invasion of their country, from taking that side, to which their opinions, or their feelings, invite them. It is, therefore, as useless to be angry with them as it would be to be angry with thunder and lightning. Our anger can have no good effect, and it may have a bad one. But, from whatever cause it has proceeded, so it is, that, in all the countries of the continent, threatened by the French, every means of defence has been resorted to, save that of *conciliating the people.* In all these countries immense armies, magazines; all sorts of fortifications; every thing is provided, except the good will of the people; the defenders have had every thing for them, except *the hearts of the persons to be defended.* The governments of these several states having numerous armies, have not only disregarded the feelings of the people, but seem to have studiously sought means of exciting those feelings against them. Upon the fall of Louis XVI. of France, the advocates for "strong government," alias, despotism, soon found out, that the unfortunate Louis owed his ruin to the *mildness* of his government and the *kindness* of his own disposition; and, of course, that the way to prevent revolutions, was not to have a mild government or a kind prince. Upon this maxim most of the old governments seem to have acted. The consequences are before us. Experience has, at last, convinced all those, who are not quite blinded by their selfish passions, that the people of no country are in love with despotic sway; that, as often as occasion offers, they will gladly rid themselves of such sway; and that, in the words of my motto, a large country, not fortified in the swords, and in the hearts, of *the people*, cannot be defended. Sir William Temple, one of the most worthy as well as most wise men that this country can boast of having given birth to, tells us, that "standing forces, or guards in con-

" stant pay, were no where used by law-
" ful princes in their native or hereditary
" countries, but only by conquerors, in
" *subdued provinces*, or *usurpers at home*;
" and were a defence against SUBJECTS,
" not against ENEMIES." Lord BACON has the same sentiment. He tells us, that " A mercenary army is the fittest to *invade* " a country, but a militia" (an arming of the people in his time) " the fittest to *de-* " *fend* it; because the first have estates to " get, and the latter to protect." How strongly have the maxims of these great men been verified in the events of the last eighteen years! The whole of the military powers of Europe fell upon France at once, while we assailed her on her shores, and this, too, at a moment when her government was broken up, and her army dissolved. Yet did France, " forti- " fied in the swords, and in the hearts, of " her people," defend her territories against all her numerous assailants; whom she with her raw militia, not only repulsed, but, become assailant in her turn, finally subdued. She defended herself without the aid of scarcely any regular forces; and her soil was never dishonoured by the feet of foreign mercenaries. But, in her works of *invasion*, she has employed men of all nations; and, she has, I dare say, found them to be the fittest for the work.——Is it not, then, madness to the last degree, to suppose, that, in an hour of invasion, Ireland can be defended, unless in that defence, the hearts of the people are engaged? Is it possible for any man to believe, that, if Ireland were invaded by only thirty thousand French, our troops would be able, at once to beat those French and to keep the people in awe, if the latter were to prove disaffected? No man can believe this. Seeing, then, that, as things now stand, an invasion of Ireland by the French might be productive of infinite injury to England as well as to Ireland, and might, indeed, be the cause of our utter extinction as an independent people; and, seeing that this danger is not (if what has been said above be correct) to be avoided by *rigorous* measures towards the Irish, let us seriously consider what can be done, in order to do away the " French party" by means of *conciliation*.——In my last, at p. 840, I expressed my intention to show, in the present Number, how, in one respect, the Irish people might be conciliated, alluding to the adoption of the measure, proposed by the late ministry, of *opening all the ranks of the Army to our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects*. I did not, however, mean to confine myself within the very narrow bounds of that measure; for, it appears very clearly to me, that *much more* than is contained in that measure *ought to be done*. I think that *all disabilities* whatever ought to be removed from the Roman Catholics of the whole kingdom; that they ought to be capable of being Judges, Privy-Counsellors, Members of both Houses of Parliament, and, in short, ought to be placed upon the same footing as the *Presbyterians*, who, it is very well known, fill, by means of an annual bill of indemnity, *any* of these situations. It needs no reasoning to convince us, that the people of Ireland, five-sixths, perhaps, of whom are Roman Catholics, must feel sore, that they will feel sore, that they will and must look upon themselves as an injured people, and that their conduct will be that of a people who think themselves injured, as long as this system of exclusion shall be adhered to; and especially now, when they see, that what has been *positively refused to them*, solely upon the alledged ground of their being Roman Catholics, has been granted to *Germans*, and to other *foreigners*, notwithstanding *their being also Roman Catholics*. This is so manifest; this is so palpable; this carries conviction so directly to every mind; that it is impossible for it not to excite in the Irish Roman Catholics feelings much easier to participate in than to describe. Let the English reader, for one moment, place himself in the situation of an Irish Catholic; let him consider himself and his family excluded from all military honours, on account of his being a Catholic, while he is taxed to pay foreign Catholics in our military service; let the English reader but so consider himself for one moment; let him put himself, in this respect, in the place of the Irish Catholic; and then let him say, how he should feel disposed, in case of an invasion of Ireland by the French.——What, then, is the *cause* of this system of exclusion? *Why* are we exposed to such danger, from an invasion of Ireland? *For what* is it that we are obliged to keep so great a force in Ireland? What is the real cause of this our enormous expence, and our danger from within as well as from without?—— The cause is, that the people of Ireland are in the state above described; but, what is the cause of that? The cause of that is, that, as it was alledged in parlia-

ment, there is a *French party* in Ireland? And, as love of the French is, in this case, synonymous with hatred of their present government, is it not reasonable to suppose, that one, at least, of the causes of that hatred, is, the system of exclusion; that system, which so cruelly wounds the feelings of all ranks of the Catholics, who do, in fact, compose the people of Ireland?——How happy would that day be, both for England and Ireland, which should see removed this endless source of envy, hatred, and malice; which would unite all hearts in defence of the country; which would put an end to all civil broils; and which would render unnecessary one half, or more than one half of our military force, *more than one half* of that force, which now costs us twenty millions of pounds sterling a year! And why does not this day come? Why should it not be the first, the very first, day of the next session of parliament? *Why* should it not?——In discussing this question, we must go back to the epoch of Lord Howick's Bill; that is, to the spring of 1807. Upon the subject of that bill, and in answer to the truly hellish howl of "*no Popery*," I addressed two letters to MR. PERCEVAL. Part of what was said in those letters I shall now repeat, without much alteration, to which I shall add such observations as seem to be called for by the circumstances, in which we are now placed, and which differ from the circumstances of 1807, only as they more loudly call for measures of conciliation.——At the epoch now referred to, the ministry had just been changed, a dissolution of parliament had taken place, a new parliament had met, a Speech from the throne had been made, and in that Speech, as well as in divers Addresses sent to the king, great stress had been laid upon certain "OBLIGATIONS," under which the family on the throne possessed that throne. The object of this was to create and spread abroad, a belief, *that the king could not give his consent to the proposed measure in favour of the Irish Catholics, without violating the compact, in virtue of which his family was exalted to the throne of this kingdom.* This notion was inculcated with all imaginable zeal and activity by the faction which had just then succeeded to the offices and emoluments of the state. How false the notion was; how hypocritical the conduct of those by whom it was propagated, we shall now see; and, I trust, the reader will be convinced, that there never did exist any obligation to prevent the king from giving his assent to that measure of conciliation for which I am an advocate, and which, I am satisfied would enable us to dispense with one half of our present military force.——Of the *obligations*, under which the crown is held, we have, in varying phraseology, heard much, from different descriptions of men, since the agitation of the question respecting the catholics. The course of reasoning with all of them is this: "That "the placing of the crown upon the heads "of His Majesty's illustrious family was, "at the time, and has been and will be, "in its consequences, the greatest of na"tional blessings; that the only prin"ciples which produced that inestimable "blessing were, the maintenance of the "predominance of the Church of England, "as by law established, and the preventing "of every thing tending to re-exalt the "Roman Catholic Church; that Lord "Howick's bill would have tended to re"exalt the Roman Catholic Church, and "would thereby have sapped the predo"minance of the Church of England; "and, therefore, that Lord Howick's bill "was contrary to the principles, which "placed the crown upon the heads of His "Majesty's illustrious family;" a conclusion perfectly correct, and indeed self-evident, if we admit the premises; but, except as far as is contained in the first proposition, (with which I presume not to meddle) all those premises I think that even I am able to disprove. Who that was a stranger to our laws and history, would not, upon hearing the language of the Speech, and of the divers addresses to the King, recently delivered,* imagine, that, when the crown of this kingdom was transferred from the Stuarts to the Guelphs, the sole condition with the latter was, *that they should suffer no relaxation in the then existing laws relating to the Roman Catholics?* To hear these addresses, and, indeed, to hear the language of all those that opposed the late ministry, or that intend to support the present ministry, who would not suppose, that the revolution in the reign of James II., was produced by a dispute about religion solely; and, that the crown was transferred to the present family merely for the sake of preventing the return of papal power or influence? Yet nothing can be further from the truth, Popish bigotry was only a part, and a

* May, 1807.

very small part, of the objections which the people of England had to that king, who was a wilful obstinate tyrant, without the cunning, which some tyrants of more inveterate baseness, have to disguise their rapacity and their cruelty. That he was a real bigot and no *hypocrite*, there can be little doubt; and, the nation would have done well in getting rid of him, if he had had no other fault; for he was beginning to crowd his court and the country with greedy foreigners, under the name of priests, and under whatever name they might come, they were, and in all cases must be, a grievous curse to any nation. But, that his crimes were not confined to tyranny in religious matters, will manifestly appear from the following List of them as recorded in that famous act of parliament, which was passed in the first year of the reign of William and Mary, and which is commonly called the *Bill of Rights*.

" Whereas the late King James the Second, by the Assistance of divers evil " Counsellors, Judges, and Ministers employed by him, did endeavour to subvert " and extirpate the Protestant Religion, " and the *Laws* and *Liberties* of this " Kingdom.

" I. By assuming and exercising a " Power *of dispensing with* and *suspending of* " *Laws*, and the Execution of Laws without Consent of Parliament.

" II. By committing and prosecuting " divers worthy Prelates, for humbly petitioning to be excused from concurring " to the said assumed Power.

" III. By issuing and causing to be " executed a Commission under the Great " Seal for erecting a Court, called, The " Court of Commissioners for Ecclesiastical " Causes.

" IV. By *Levying Money* for and to " the Use of the Crown, by Pretence of " Prerogative, *for other Time and in other* " *Manner, than the same was granted by* " *Parliament*.

" V. By raising and keeping a Standing Army within this Kingdom in Time " of Peace, without Consent of Parliament, and quartering Soldiers contrary " to Law.

" VI. By causing several good Subjects, being Protestants, to be disarmed, " at the same time when Papists were " both armed and employed contrary to " Law.

" VII. BY VIOLATING THE FREEDOM OF ELECTION OF MEMBERS " TO SERVE IN PARLIAMENT.

" VIII. By Prosecutions in the Court of " King's Bench, for Matters and Causes " cognizable only in Parliament; and " by divers other arbitrary and illegal " Courses.

" IX. And whereas of late years *partial, corrupt*, and unqualified persons " have been *returned and served on Juries,* " *and Trials*, and *particularly divers Jurors* " *in Trials for High Treason*, which were " not Freeholders.

" X. And excessive Bail hath been " required of Persons committed in criminal cases, *to elude the Benefit of the Laws,* " *made for the Liberty of the Subjects.*

" XI. And excessive fines have been " imposed; and illegal and cruel punishments have been inflicted.

" XII. And several *Grants and Promises made of Fines and Forfeitures, before* " *any Conviction or Judgment against the* " *Persons, upon whom the same were to be* " *levied.*

" All which are utterly and directly " contrary to the known Laws and Statutes, and Freedom of this Realm."

Such were the crimes of James II. Whether, in any other reign, laws have been dispensed with, or suspended: whether, in any other reign, money have been levied, or expended (which is exactly the same thing) for other purposes than those for which it was granted; whether the freedom of elections of members to serve in parliament has, no matter how, been violated; whether there have been any packed juries, especially for the trial of those who were charged with crimes connected with politics; whether the laws for the protection of personal liberty have been eluded, and men kept in prison for years without any trial, from first to last; whether fines and forfeitures have been held out as inducements to every man to betray and to swear against his neighbour; whether these things have taken place in any other reign, I must leave those who are better acquainted with such matters than I am, to say; but, I think, it must be allowed, that, when we see they existed in the reign of James II, we need seek for no other cause of his being driven from his throne. That he was a bigot, and that the church, so soon after the days of popery, were justly alarmed, is true; but, that his other crimes were of a much greater magnitude, we need only read the list of them to be satisfied. And, as to the *Declaration of Rights*, which follow the above list of crimes, not a single word

do they contain upon the subject of religion.

" I. That the pretended Power of sus-
" pending of Laws, or the Execution of
" Laws, by regal Authority, without con-
" sent of Parliament, is illegal.

" II. That the pretended Power of dis-
" pensing with Laws, or the Execution of
" Laws, by regal Authority, as it hath been
" assumed and exercised of late, is illegal.

" III. That the Commission for erecting
" the late Court of Commissioners for Ec-
" clesiastical Causes, and all other Commis-
" sions and Courts of like Nature, are illegal
" and pernicious.

" IV. That levying Money for or to the
" Use of the Crown, by Pretence of Prero-
" gative, without Grant of Parliament, for
" longer Time, or in other Manner than
" the same is or shall be granted, is il-
" legal.

" V. That it is the Right of the Sub-
" jects to petition the King, and all Com-
" mitments and Prosecutions for such pe-
" titioning are illegal.

" VI. That the raising or keeping a
" Standing Army within the Kingdom in
" time of Peace, unless it be with consent
" of Parliament, is against law.

" VII. That the Subjects which are
" Protestants, may have Arms for their
" Defence suitable to their Conditions, and
" as allowed by Law.

" VIII. That Elections of Members of
" Parliament ought to be free.

" IX. That the Freedom of Speech,
" and Debates or Proceedings in Parlia-
" ment, ought not to be impeached or
" questioned in any Court or Place out of
" Parliament.

" X. That excessive Bail ought not to
" be required, nor excessive Fines im-
" posed; nor cruel and unusual Punish-
" ments inflicted.

" XI. That Jurors ought to be duly
" impannelled and returned, and Jurors
" which pass sentence upon Men in Trials
" for High Treason ought to be Free-
" holders.

" XII. That all Grants and Promises
" of Fines and Forfeitures of particular
" Persons before Conviction are illegal
" and void.

" XIII. And that for Redress of all
" Grievances, and for amending, strength-
" ening, and preserving of the Laws,
" Parliaments ought to be held fre-
" quently."

These were the principles, which produced the revolution of 1688; and, though the maintenance of the protestant established church makes a part of them, it is, as I said before, a very inconsiderable part. The people of England saw, that, unless they overset the power of James II, they must become slaves, and, therefore, they drove him, and most justly, from the throne. Whether they acted wisely as to the appointing of his successor, is a question which I pretend not to discuss.—— Out of these principles grew the *Act of Settlement*, as it is usually called, which was passed in the second year of the reign of William and Mary, and which was occasioned by the prospect of a total want of heirs to the crown from either Queen Mary or the Princess Anne, afterwards Queen Anne. By this act, which is entitled an act for *limiting* the crown, it was placed upon the heads of his Majesty's family; and, let us see, therefore, what were the principles by which it was so placed, and what were the conditions, and "*obligations*," to use the word of the Speech, under which it was to be held. Let us see if there was any obligation, either expressed or implied, that no relaxation should, thereafter, take place, under any circumstances whatever, in the laws and regulations relative to the Roman Catholics; but, first, let us fix well in our memory, that the act we are about to quote was, " an act for the further *limita-*
" *tion of the crown*, and *better securing the*
" *rights and liberties of the subject*," saying, in its title at least, not a single word about either the protestant or the popish religion. This act, after providing, that the king or queen in future should take the coronation oath, as prescribed by a former act of parliament, of which oath I shall speak by-and-by, it proceeds to make the following further provisions for " securing the religion,
" laws, and liberties of the kingdom."

" That whosoever shall hereafter come
" to the Possession of this Crown, shall
" join in Communion with the Church of
" England, as by Law established.

" That in case the Crown and Imperial
" Dignity of this Realm shall hereafter
" come to any Person, not being a Native
" of this Kingdom of England, *this Nation*
" *be not obliged to engage in any War for*
" *the Defence of any Dominions or Territo-*
" *ries which do not belong to the Crown of*
" *England, without the consent of Parlia-*
" *ment.*

" That after the said Limitation shall take
" effect as aforesaid, *no Person born out of*
" *the Kingdoms of England, Scotland, or*
" *Ireland, or the Dominions thereunto be-*

" *longing (although he be naturalized or* " *made a Denizen, except such as are born* " *of English Parents) shall be capable to be* " *of the Privy Council, or a Member of* " *either House of Parliament, or to enjoy* " ANY OFFICE OR PLACE OF TRUST, " EITHER CIVIL OR MILITARY, *or* " *to have any Grant of Lands, Tenements,* " *or Hereditaments, from the Crown, to him-* " *self or to any other or others in Trust for* " *him.*

" THAT NO PERSON WHO HAS " AN OFFICE OR PLACE OF PROFIT " UNDER THE KING, OR RECEIVES " A PENSION FROM THE CROWN, " SHALL BE CAPABLE OF SERVING " AS A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF " COMMONS.

" And whereas the Laws of England are " *the Birthright* of the People thereof, all " the Kings and Queens, who shall ascend " the Throne of this Realm, ought to ad- " minister the government of the same ac- " cording to the said Laws, and all their " Officers and Ministers ought to serve " them respectively according to the " same."

These were the principles which placed the crown upon the heads of his Majesty's family; and here, and no where else, are we to look for the " *obligations,*" under which, as it is said in the Speech, the crown is held. It is true, that one of these obligations is, that *the king* shall join in communion with the church of England; but no obligation is there expressed; no obligation is there implied, that the king shall refuse his assent to any law for bettering the condition of his Roman Catholic subjects.——I have distinguished certain parts of this quotation by italic characters; and I ask, *whether this nation has not been obliged to engage in wars for the defence of dominions which do not belong to the crown of England*, without the *previous* consent (for any other *consent* is absurd) of even modern parliaments? I ask, *whether foreigners have not been suffered to fill offices of trust, and of emolument, civil and military?* I ask, *whether no person who has an office or place of profit under the king, or receives a pension from the crown, is capable of serving as a member of the House of Commons?* I shall be told, that this *latter* part of the provisions above quoted has been *repealed* by a subsequent act of parliament; but this only shews, that, *unless the repeal was a most daring violation of the rights of the people, the repeal of no law relative to the Roman Catholics can be held as any very daring violation.* If this, the far most important, in my opinion, of all the " obligations," under which the crown was held, could be done away by an act of parliament, why could not *any other of the obligations* be done away by the same authority? There is, neither in the Act of Settlement, nor in any act of parliament now in existence, or that ever was in existence, no prohibition, no restriction whatever, with respect to a relaxation of the laws relative to Roman Catholics. Upon what ground then, is it pretended, that the enabling of the king legally to promote Roman Catholics to any ranks in the army and navy, would have been contrary to the " obligations," under which his crown is held?——Now, after what has been said here, what are we to think of those persons, who pretend, that the king's *conscience* would have been wounded, if he had given his consent to the measure of Lord Howick? To be sure, it is hardly possible to form an idea of any thing so base as this pretence. The heart in which it was engendered is equal to any thing, equal to any species and any extent of baseness.——But, there was another cry set up: " *the* CHURCH" (good old Mother Church) " *was in danger.*" This infernal howl rang through the country; and the most ignorant part of the people were made to believe, that the " *papishes*" were coming to re-kindle the fires in Smithfield? I am not much of a theologian; not much skilled in the classification of sins; but, in my judgment, if any act of man entitles him to everlasting torture, it must be such an act as that of which the " *No Popery*" crew were guilty in 1807. The *Church* in danger! The Church is in much more danger from the refusal to conciliate the Catholics, than from the adoption of the measure proposed.——Let us, however, examine this matter more closely. Let us expose the hypocrisy of this cry, in doing which I have merely to repeat the substance of what was before said upon the subject.—— But, first of all, let me observe, that there is one question, very material in this discussion, which seems to have been entirely overlooked, namely, *whether the sapping of the predominance of the Church of England would be a national evil?* I, for my own part, should regret to see it sapped, and overthrown, because I am persuaded, that it might easily be restored to its former purity and utility; but, when we see in what manner its benefices are but too generally bestowed; when we look at the

endless list of non-resident incumbents; when we see the fruits enjoyed by those of its ministers who perform none, or very little of the labour; when we compare the solemn promises of the incumbents with their subsequent practice; when we see more than half of the people, who frequent any place of worship at all, turning from the church to the meeting-house: when we see all this, we must not be very much surprized, if there should be found many persons, who entertain doubts, at least, upon the question above stated; and, therefore, previous to the clamour against Lord Howick's bill, as tending to sap the predominance of the church, those doubts should have been removed.——Viewing the church establishment as connected with the political state of the country, it should, in like manner, have been previously shown, that this establishment has been, and is, conducive to the greatness of the nation, the permanence of the throne, and the freedom and happiness of the people. It should have been shewn, that the several persons embodied under the church establishment, are more jealous of the national character, than a Roman Catholic clergy would have been; we should have been referred to a time when the Roman Catholic clergy taught political doctrine more slavish than that which has been, and is, taught by the clergy of the present day; we should have been convinced, that, if the Romish church had been re-exalted, its priests would, in general, have exceeded our priests in political sycophancy and election jobbing; we should have been assured, that an instance, *of which I myself was a witness*, of a Doctor of Divinity offering for sale *two seats in parliament*, if not previously disposed of, *as the price of some dignity in the church*, is only a specimen of what we should have seen in gross under the re-exaltation of the Romish church; we should have been reminded of a time, when, under a Romish hierarchy, a state of parliamentary representation surpassing the present, existed, bearing in mind the fate of *Mr. Madocks's motion*; something should have been said, some effort should have been made, to prove to us, either from experience or from reason, that, under a Romish hierarchy, Englishmen would have experienced something more than the income tax, than the seven-years suspension of the Habeas Corpus act, than the introduction of foreign troops, something more than what, for these twenty-three years past, they have experienced; it should, if possible, have been shewn, that, at some time or other when England was under a Roman Catholic church, England was in greater peril from without, or in greater misery within, than she is at this moment. All this, or some of it, at least, should have been shewn, previous to the raising of an outcry against Lord Howick's bill, as a source of danger to the church; because, to put reasonable men on the side of its opponents, it was necessary to convince them, that the thing, said to be in danger, was a thing the protecting and preeserving of which was of some importance to the good of the nation.——Taking it for granted, however, that the church establishment, even as it now stands, with all its pluralities and absentees, is a thing worth contending for, I cannot see how that establishment could possibly have been affected by Lord Howick's bill, if that bill had passed into a law. It is now matter of general notoriety, and it is matter of fact not to be denied, 1st, that in 1793, the power of granting commissions to catholics, in the Irish army, was, by law, given to the king, and that this law was passed with the approbation of Mr. Pitt, and of almost the whole of those who are now in the ministry: 2d, that in 1801, Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas went out of office, being followed by Mr. Canning, Mr. Rose, and others now in the ministry, because the king would not consent to the bringing in of a bill, intended to give the Roman Catholics even seats in parliament, upon the bench, and in the privy council; 3d, that in 1804, a law, brought in by Mr. Pitt, was passed, authorizing the king to raise regiments of Roman Catholic *foreigners*, to grant commissions to *foreign* Roman Catholic officers, to dispense with all oaths from them, except a simple oath of fidelity, and to quarter and station these regiments in the heart of our country; 4th, that *all this the king had done without any act of parliament to sanction it*, and that the act of 1804, was, in part, an act to indemnify those who had advised him so to do; 5th, that, at the time when this bill passed, every person now in the ministry was in power, and that you as attorney general (Mr. Perceval), must have examined, if not actually have drawn up, that bill. Greatly puzzled, therefore, must the world be to discover any thing in the bill of Lord Howick more dangerous to the church than what was contained in the bill actually passed with you and your present colleagues approbation. Am I told, that,

to admit Roman Catholic *foreigners*, was not dangerous, because they could have no connection, or community of interests, with the Roman Catholics, whether priests or laity, in this country? My answer is, that this distinction is done away by the act of 1793, which authorised the king to grant commissions to Roman Catholics serving in the *Irish* army; so that, if the acts of you and your colleagues were not hostile to the established church it is impossible that the bill of Lord Howick could have been so.——But, waiving all argument drawn from the example of Pitt and of yourself, what did Lord Howick's bill propose to do? To render it *lawful* for the king to grant, *if he pleased*, commissions to English and Irish Catholics, through the whole of the several ranks of the army and the navy, and to insure, by law, the free exercise of his worship, to every Roman Catholic soldier or sailor. It is, Sir, beyond my powers of penetration to discover any danger, even the most remote, that could, from such a law, have arisen to the church of England; and, especially when I take into view the well-known facts, that the king, without any such law, has long granted commissions to his Roman Catholic subjects, and that the Roman Catholic soldiers and sailors are, and long have been, freed from all restraint as to the exercise of their worship. Besides, suppose the bounds to have been extended by this law, *it rested wholly with the king*, to appoint or not appoint, to promote or not promote, to cashier or not cashier, any, and every, Roman catholic, either in the army or the navy; so that, if there was any danger at all in the extension, it must have consisted solely in the possibility of the king's not being guided by wisdom in the choice and promotion of his officers. But, even in this case, where shall we look for the source of danger to the *church?* In what way could this bill, a bill intended merely to extend the operation of the king's pleasure, as to promotions in the army and navy, or rather, to render the operation of that pleasure legal; in what way could such a law endanger the safety of the church establishment? It gave nothing to the Roman catholic priests or bishops, either in authority, in name, or in money. It took nothing, either of power or emolument, from the church of England. It left both churches just as they were before; and, if the church of England has experienced any danger from it, or does experience any danger from it, it is that danger which a false and hypocritical clamour seldom fails, first or last, to bring down upon the heads of its inventors and promoters.—— "What, then," some one will say, "in- "duced so many of the clergy of the church "of England to send *addresses* against Lord "Howick's bill?" That, Sir, which induces the crowds, that beset Whitehall, to address letters to the minister of the day: a desire to obtain money for doing nothing. If the motive had been other than this; if any thing but the goal of preferment had been in view, the clergy would not have been so tardy in their opposition to the bill. If they had been animated by an anxiety for the preservation of the church, and had regarded the bill as dangerous to it, how came they not to petition the parliament the moment the bill was brought in? They never thought of any such thing. They let the bill go quietly on; nor was it until the bill had been *withdrawn*, that they began to issue their godly fulminations against it. Nay, Sir, even this was not enough to overcome their propensity to be cautious; for they saw the ministry safely turned out, and even after that *they waited to see you with a majority on your side*, before they ventured to address their gracious and pious sovereign for his care in preventing the overthrow of the church. It would be curious enough to see the list of those, who took the lead in these addresses; but, there needs no such list to make their motives evident to the world.—— Hypocrisy, detestable in any man, is peculiarly so when met with under the garb of a minister of religion; and, therefore, the cry of "NO POPERY," set up, or propagated, by too many of the clergy, must, first or last, receive its just reward, in the natural consequences of general detestation. This is not the first set of priests, who have kindled a flame in the multitude; and, as the usual consequence has, heretofore, been the destruction of the kindlers, let them beware. ——Here I stopped in 1807. *Let them beware!* I then said; and, I am very much deceived, if they will not very soon see reason to think, that my advice was sound. ——It is, then, I think, clear, that there was no obstacle to the measure proposed by the late ministry, other than the political intrigues of those, who wished to have their places. It is quite clear, that there was nothing in that measure, hostile to the principles, which placed the king's family upon the throne; that it had in it nothing dangerous to the Church; and, in short,

that so far from granting too much to the Catholics, it contemplated the grant of but a very small part of what might be safely granted to them.——There are, perhaps, other causes of discontent amongst the people of Ireland; but, we, surely, in our search after causes, need go no further than the *system of exclusion*; that odious and invidious system, under which it is *impossible* that they should be content. But, if this system was odious before, if it was grating to the souls of the Catholics to see Presbyterians, and all others but themselves, admitted to a share in all the offices and powers and authorities of the government; if it was grating before, what must it be *now*, when they see, not only a *law* passed, permitting the king to admit Roman Catholics, provided they be *foreigners*, into the army, and to give them *rank to any extent*; but, when they see, that he has so admitted them, and has been promoting and giving them honours in the service, without exacting from *them* that oath of abjuration, which is so rigorously exacted from the Irish Catholics? What must be the feelings of an Irish Catholic upon contemplating this distinction?——Reader, can you conceive *why* this distinction was made, and why it is adhered to? The king's *conscience*, we were told, by the precious hypocrites of 1807; the king's conscience would not permit him to give his assent to a law, enabling him *to exercise his own pleasure* in the promoting of his Roman Catholic Subjects in the army; his *conscience*, they told us, would not permit him to do this; when (Oh! the matchless knaves!) there was, at that same time, in existence, a law, to which *the king had given his assent*, enabling him to employ and give rank to German (aye, to *German!*) and other foreign Roman Catholics in that same army, upon which law he had chearfully and cordially acted. Now, then, I leave you to say, if any thing ever was so detestable as the conduct of those men, who, in 1807, pretended that the late ministry made an attempt upon the *conscience* of the king; and, it is, I think, impossible, that, sooner or later, that conduct should escape punishment.——It is an insult to the king, of the most outrageous description, to suppose, that "*scruples* of "*conscience*" prevented him from giving his assent to a law, which was to open the door of promotion in the army to Roman Catholics who were his *own subjects*, when he had already given his assent to, and was acting upon, a law which had opened that door to Roman Catholics who were *foreigners*. Talk of *disloyalty*, indeed! In what light more odious than this is it possible for disloyalty, however inveterate, to place the conduct and disposition of the king? But, this, as it has been well-observed in the EXAMINER of last Sunday, is after the manner of these men, who always lug in *the king*; who always endeavour to make him *a party with them*; and who thus, by implication, *identify opposition to themselves with disloyalty to the king*. Yet, this device is not original; for the reader will find, by a reference to the Parliamentary History, in the reign of Charles II., that just so; exactly in the same manner, acted those men, who by an abuse of the king's name, prepared the way for the expulsion of the family of STUART. They, too, called themselves exclusively, "*the king's friends*," and, indeed, they practised all those arts, which have, of late years, been so much in vogue, and which have brought us into our present perilous situation.——Enough has now, I think, been said to convince any impartial man of the necessity of conciliatory measures towards the Irish Catholics, as the only means of obtaining a *sure defence* for that now-vulnerable part of the kingdom. In estimating our dangers, how large a part of them arises from Ireland every man capable of reasoning must perceive. In estimating our wants of force, Ireland is the grand item. In estimating our annual expences, Ireland again stands foremost upon the list. Ought not some attempt to be made, then, to change the situation of Ireland? And, will the intriguing hypocrites still tell us, that the *king's conscience* stands in the way of such change?——My object, for the reasons I have already stated, is not to promote a desire to see a change in the *ministry*, about which, unless a change of system be first openly avowed, I am quite indifferent; but, at any rate, I wish to see Ireland conciliated, and that speedily; for, without that, I am thoroughly convinced, there can be no safe defence, for any part of this kingdom, against the long-planned and persevering attempts of our enemy.

COVENT GARDEN THEATRE.——Two reasons have hitherto prevented me from making the scenes at this place a subject of remark: the *first*, that the REGISTER has never meddled with theatrical matters; and, the *second*, that to obtain, at this dis-

stance, correct information was difficult. ——The first impression upon my mind was, that the demand of *Old Prices* was unreasonable, seeing that all things have so much advanced in price; and, besides, it appeared to me to be *a violation of the rights of property* to attempt to compel people *to sell entertainment at the price pointed out by the purchaser*, who was at liberty to leave the commodity to others, if he did not choose to take it at the seller's price. ——The argument of *monopoly* had some weight against this reasoning, though it did not appear to me conclusive against the Proprietors; nor did I care a straw about their account that was published, because whether they got more than six per cent., or not, appeared to me to have nothing at all to do with the matter.——As to the *private boxes*, considered as a source of *immorality*, I do not think much of that, being of opinion, that the quantity of immorality will be the same, whether those boxes be private or public. But, if it be correct (of which I can hardly doubt now) that the construction of the House pens up, *drives back*, and *degrades*, the middling class of people, that appears to me to be a solid ground of objection; and a ground, too, upon which the audience have a full and complete right to make a stand; because, the liberty to act plays is not given for the *private advantage of the players*, but for the *entertainment of the public;* and, it appears to me, that those who act under the patent, have no more right to drive back and degrade the people, than has the minister of any church, by appropriating all the convenient and comfortable and conspicuous parts of that church to the exclusive use of the rich.——To this distribution, therefore, of the room in the theatre, I should have objected, even if the price of admission had been but half what it formerly was; and, if the description given me be correct, I must say, that the proprietors do seem to have lost sight of that respect, which it is always their duty to show towards the public at large. I am willing to suppose, that they meant no disrespect; but, certainly, such is the appearance. —— But, I might have got over this; I might even have wished to forget the employment of the Jews and Bruisers; but, how is it *possible* ever to forget the attempts that have been made upon the *personal liberty* of so many of the people? Here the matter becomes a *political* one, and a matter, too, of far more interest to us, than the result of the war in Spain and Portugal, adding thereunto the result of our garrisoning of the island of Sicily. The movements of Messrs. READ and GRAHAM are of infinitely more interest to us, than the movements of Baron Douro and the Duke of Dalmatia; and the victory of MR. CLIFFORD a thousand and a thousand times repays us for the loss of the battle of Wagram, which produced the fall of Austria.——In my next, I will put upon record an account of this Trial; but, in the meanwhile, let me not omit to express my admiration of *the conduct of the Jury*, and particularly of the answer, which they gave to the Judge, when they said, that they thought it *very harsh* to construe so slight a matter into an act of *riot*. There spoke the good sense of Englishmen; there breathed the mild spirit of English law! *Rioting* indeed! Had there been a spirit of *rioting*, would there now have been a bench or a door or any moveable thing in the House? Yes, it is indeed, "very harsh" to call what is passing at the theatre *rioting;* it is carrying the terrors of criminal law into places of amusement. ——I have not time for further remarks, at present; but, I cannot refrain from expressing an earnest hope, that the Proprietors will adopt, *without loss of time*, MEASURES *of* CONCILIATION. Other measures, of almost every sort that has a name, they have tried in vain; and, therefore, I hope they will now try what CONCILIATION will do.——N. B. I wish very much to be furnished with a correct account of all the instances in which *bail* has been required at *Bow Street*, and the circumstances of the parties from whom demanded.—— This is a very important matter.

WM. COBBETT.

Botley, 7th Dec. 1809.

EDINBURGH REVIEW,

On the Conduct of the War, and Parliamentary Reform.

[To the MORNING CHRONICLE I am indebted for an earlier sight of the following article than I should otherwise have obtained. I, therefore, insert the Introduction used by that print.]

The article in the last number of the Edinburgh Review, entitled, "The Conduct of the War," contains an excellent view of the proceedings of the army under Sir John Moore, in the North of Spain, founded upon a careful examination of all the documents and publications which have appeared on this subject. The following short but elo-

quent tribute to the memory of the Hero of Corunna, will not be read without interest:

"The battle which he fought at the "end of this memorable retreat, and which "closed the sufferings of his followers, "and his own career of glory, will live "for ever in the recollection of his grate-"ful country. But it is not this last scene "of his triumph alone that will claim the "lasting regards of England. She will "proudly remember that his judgment "and skill were only surpassed by his "unconquerable valour; she will fondly "dwell upon that matchless self-denial "which subjected all his interests to her "weal, as it devoted all his faculties to her "service; she will hold him up to her "most famous warriors in after times, "when the envious clamours of the hour "are hushed, and the minions of present "power are forgotten, as a bright exam-"ple of that entire forbearance,—that "utter extinction of every selfish feeling, "—that high and manly sacrifice even of "the highest and manliest of passions,—"that severe mortification of ambition "itself, which she has a paramount right "to require from him to whom she yields "the guidance of her armies; and, while "she records that the hero of Corunna "fought *no vain battles*,—courted *no vul-"gar applause in rash and senseless marches*, "—*lost no trophies, no captives*,—*abandoned "no hospitals to the enemy*, and *yielded no "post of danger to feeble allies*,—she will "pronounce the name of MOORE, to "blight those un-hallowed laurels which "are won by the wasted blood of her "children, and the tarnished honour "of her arms."—This is succeeded by a perspicuous and impressive historical summary of the measures pursued by Government in the subsequent prosecution of the war. It concludes with the following observations, which are worthy of particular attention:—"The "Parliament of England is about to as-"semble once more; and the authors of "our calamities cannot prevent their con-"duct from being at least brought before "that illustrious tribunal. Hitherto they "have not made any defence; nor have "they even hinted that they had any "to make. They have admitted all their "failures to be complete and fatal; they "have confessed, that the opportunities "which they have lost will in all likeli-"hood never return. After a few wretched "attempts to divide the blame among "themselves, in shares different from "those in which the country is dis-"posed to apportion it, they have been "compelled to allow that among them-"selves it must all be divided, and upon "them alone must the responsibility rest. "They have not dared to deny, that the "prospects of the Continent are become "more dismal than ever; that its confi-"dence in England is gone; that the "map of Europe, from Moscow to Paris, "and from Lapland to Calabria, offers to "the eye only a collection of States, ag-"grandised by her hostility, or ruined "by the perilous bounty of her alliance. "Abroad and at home—which way so-"ever the eye can turn, our rulers have "amply admitted, that our affairs are "only not desperate, and have themselves "come forward to declare, that the em-"pire is reduced to a state of difficulty, "from which there can be at least no pre-"cedent of its ever having escaped in "former times. And after all these con-"fessions, their only excuse, the only at-"tempt they make to regain the confi-"dence of the people, is to tell us, "*that "the King has reigned fifty years.*" They "have ruined our allies; they have "failed in every plan: they have brought "us through slaughter and disgrace, "loaded with ignominy, and weighed "down with almost intolerable burdens—"to the very brink of destruction:—'but "the King is very old,' and 'he has reigned "above half a century.'—It now remains "to be seen, *whether that* PARLIAMENT, *which "stands in no need of reformation—which is a "fair representative of the people of England "—which speaks the sentiments of the country* "—will be satisfied with this set off; "and once more acquit the Ministers of all "blame for their recent mismanagement. "Holding, in common with the Parlia-"ment itself, the doctrine of its purity and "of its sufficiency to save the State, we can-"not anticipate such a decision. But *if*, "unhappily, we should find ourselves mis-"taken; if, again, every measure and "every minister be covered over with its "approbation, *then we will venture to predict*, "*not that the Government is acquitted, but "that the Parliament stands condemned*; and "we shall most unwillingly *be compelled to "appear in the foremost rank of those who "must acknowledge that they are convinced "and converted.* For it is needless to dis-'guise the matter. A refusal *to punish* "the authors of our misfortunes can only "mean one of two things—either that "there has been no blame incurred—or "that it is inexpedient to declare it, be-

"cause such a resolution would drive the "guilty persons from the Government. "In the one case, the Parliament will "show that it is not the Representative of "the Country; in the other, we shall have "a conclusive proof that the Ministers of "the Crown are irremovable. The *re-* "*sponsibility of our rulers,* that fairest fea- "ture in the theory of the Constitution, "will be *no longer even a name,* wherewithal "to round parliamentary periods; and "the people will *thenceforward* recognise, "in the great Council of the Nation, *not* "*the guardian of their interests,* and the "*champion of their rights,* but *a well contrived* "*instrument of taxation.*—The consequences "of such a decision, therefore, will be "productive of incalculable mischief; it "will *complete the alienation of the Country* "*from the Government, and shame away the* "*boldest defenders of the present system.* In "the mean time, the pressure of the war, "and of the public burthens, will rapidly "increase. The scene of hostilities will "approach to our own shores; and the "taxes, which, like the war, have as yet "only been felt at a distance, will at "length come home to every man.* This "truth will then break upon the minds of "all, even of the most confiding and in- "considerate,—the truth with which we "opened the present discussion—that "there is an intimate and necessary con- "nection between the foreign policy of "the State, and the happiness of each in- "dividual within its boundaries; that "every man who pays taxes—every man "who values the security of his property, "or his own future safety from foreign do- "minion, is immediately affected by the "mismanagement of the war; that not a "plan falls to the ground, not a bad ap- "pointment of Commander or Ambas- "sador is made at Court, not an opportu- "nity of beating the enemy in councils, "or in arms, is lost, without our being, a "little sooner, or a little later, indivi- "dually sensible of it. *What will then re-* "*main for the people to do, we need scarcely* "*point out.* If they value their personal "happiness and national independence, "they will watch over their rulers with "redoubled jealousy, and never rest satis- "fied until their efforts shall have restored "the *indisputable connection between misrule* "*and retribution.*"

* We do not mean to blame the additional rigour with which the taxes, especially that on property, are now levied; because it is undoubtedly fair that defaulters should be made, as far as possible, to contribute; and we only fear, the utmost ingenuity of the collectors will still be eluded by the mercantile classes. But we simply state the fact, that the country scarcely knows the weight of those taxes.

OFFICIAL PAPERS.

ITALY.—*Proclamation issued by Eugene Napoleon, Arch-Chancellor of State of the French Empire, Viceroy of Italy, Prince of Venice, and Commander in Chief of the Army of Italy, to the People of the Tyrol, dated, Head Quarters, Villach, Oct. 26th,* 1809.

Tyroleans! Peace is concluded between his Majesty the Emperor of the French, King of Italy, Protector of the Confederation of the Rhine, my august Father and Sovereign, and his Majesty the Emperor of Austria.—Peace therefore prevails every where, except among you—you only do not enjoy its benefits.—Listening to perfidious suggestions, you have taken up arms against your laws, and have subverted them, and now you are gathering the bitter fruits of your rebellion; terror governs your cities; idleness and misery reign in you; discord is in the midst of you; and disorder every where prevails. His Majesty the Emperor and King, touched with your deplorable situation, and with the testimonies of repentance which several of you have conveyed to his throne, has expressly consented, in the Treaty of Peace, to pardon your errors and misconduct.—I then bring you peace since I bring you pardon. But I declare to you, that pardon is granted you only on the condition that you return to your obedience and duty, that you voluntarily lay down your arms, and that you offer no resistance to my troops.—Charged with the command of the armies which surround you, I come to receive your submission, or to compel you to submit.—The army will be preceded by Commissioners appointed by me to hear your complaints, and to do justice to the demands you may have to make—But know that these Commissioners can only listen to you when you have laid down your arms.—Tyroleans! If your complaints and demands be well founded, I hereby promise that justice shall be done you.

LONDON:—Printed by T. C. HANSARD, Peterborough-Court, Fleet-Street;
Published by R. BAGSHAW, Brydges-Street, Covent-Garden:—Sold also by J. BUDD, Pall-Mall.